

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Don't you think these things have to go slowly? The people aren't ready for this.

A. Can you explain what you mean by the "people not being ready"? Do you mean that no Negroes are ready or qualified to serve in sales capacities? Do you mean that you and your organization, your supervision and personnel are not ready? Or do you mean that your customers are not ready to be waited upon by Negro personnel?

If the reply is, "Negroes are not ready or qualified to serve, answer further:

We do not ask you to take any unqualified person. We only ask that you apply exactly the same qualification requirements for all persons regardless of race and that you employ those who do qualify on the same basis without reference to race. We are confident that there are qualified Negroes available now and that many more will qualify as it becomes clear that there are opportunities in the field. The schools train in retail selling and merchandising.

If the reply is, "Out organization is not ready," answer further:

You probably have as intelligent personnel as any other place of comparable operation. Your supervision is probably equal to similar firms. Other firms have done this successfully so I think you can. We don't suggest that you go into it blindly. There are consultants available who have helped establish a policy of integrated employment in other places. There are agencies in Detroit who are prepared to sit down with you and map out the procedures which have been successful in the past. The first step is that top administrative officers of an organization must decide that it shall be done. The rest takes time but it is not hard.

If the reply is, "Our customers will not accept it," answer further:

We do not believe that customers will stay away from your store because you have Negro sales people. We believe that your store offers sufficient shopping advantages so that your clientele will not be antagonized by efficient sales personnel, no matter what race they may represent. People all over Detroit are being served by Negroes every day, in their homes, on public transportation, in public offices, in restaurants and hotels and in your own store. A Negro maid in a washroom is working in as intimate a relationship as a girl selling stationery or yard goods. Other stores in other parts of the country have Negro sales personnel and report no adverse public reaction whatsoever. Adjusting your personnel policy would not involve suddenly placing hundreds